

SENATE BILL 2696

By Finney R.

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3,
relative to special sergeants-at-arms.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3, Chapter 1, Part 1, is amended by
adding the following language as a new section:

3-1-1__.

(a) A person who is designated to serve as a sergeant-at-arms or deputy to the
sergeant-at-arms pursuant to the rules of either house of the general assembly shall be
eligible for appointment as a special sergeant-at-arms. The speaker of the house of
representatives is authorized to appoint sergeants-at-arms and deputies to the
sergeants-at-arms from the house of representatives as special sergeants-at-arms. The
speaker of the senate is authorized to appoint sergeants-at-arms and deputies to the
sergeants-at-arms from the senate as special sergeants-at-arms.

(b) All special sergeants-at-arms shall be vested with police powers while on
official duty. It is their duty to arrest any and all persons committing nuisances or
misdemeanors in or around the State Capitol, the Legislative Plaza, the War Memorial
Building, annexes, or on the grounds, or for other violation of law, and take such
offender or offenders before some magistrate for trial and punishment. In addition,
special sergeants-at-arms shall be vested with police powers while on official duty in any
part of the state:

(1) While accompanying a member of the general assembly who is
conducting, or traveling to or from, such member's official duties; or

(2) While preparing for, or providing security to, a session of either or both
houses of the general assembly, or official events directly related to that session.

(c) A special sergeant-at-arms shall be eligible to attend joint legislative sessions and joint committee meetings regardless of the authority that appointed the special sergeant-at-arms.

(d) Notwithstanding § 39-17-1359 to the contrary, the speaker of each house of the general assembly is authorized to designate special sergeants-at-arms who are permitted to carry handguns while on official duty in otherwise posted locations. Any such designation shall be made in writing. Only those special sergeants-at-arms who meet the following qualifications are eligible to be permitted to carry handguns pursuant to this subsection (d):

(1) The special sergeant-at-arms must obtain and maintain a current Tennessee handgun carry permit issued pursuant to the requirements of § 39-17-1351; and

(2) The special sergeant-at-arms must demonstrate annually firearm safety and marksmanship proficiency equivalent to the level of firearm safety and marksmanship proficiency that members of the Tennessee highway patrol are required to demonstrate. The commissioner of safety is authorized to designate firing ranges where firearms safety and marksmanship tests will be administered to special sergeants-at-arms.

(e) Each member of the special sergeants-at-arms, upon the member's appointment and before entering upon the member's duties, shall swear and subscribe to the following oath:

"I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of Tennessee, and will well and faithfully perform the duties imposed upon me as a member of the special sergeants-at-arms to the best of my ability; that I will serve the state of

Tennessee honestly and faithfully, and will obey the orders of the officers and officials placed over me according to law.”

(f) Subject to funding, the office of legislative administration is authorized to purchase and distribute handguns for use by the special sergeants-at-arms.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008, the public welfare requiring it.